

Appendix H
Wetlands Report Summary

M-15 DEIS Wetlands Report Summary

The Wetlands Report, provided under separate cover, is a companion document to the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) prepared for the M-15 project. The purpose of the report is to present preliminary wetland determinations for those areas potentially impacted by construction of M-15 between I-75 and I-69 in Oakland and Genesee counties.

Fifty-two wetlands occur within the proposed right-of-way (Figure H-1). Eighteen wetlands include at least some forested wetland communities, 42 contain some emergent communities, 13 contain scrub-shrub communities, and 17 contain open water. All wetlands along the proposed right-of-way provide wildlife habitat, water storage capacity, water quality improvement, and aesthetic enhancement to the surrounding communities. In addition, all the impacted wetlands are imbedded in a landscape experiencing mounting development pressures, increasing their potential future value to society.

State and federal laws protect wetlands and require that: 1) they be avoided to the extent feasible and prudent; 2) if unavoidable, impacts be minimized; and, 3) mitigation be provided in the form of wetland replacement, generally as close to the impact area as possible. When practical alternatives for the M-15 improvement project were developed, avoidance of wetlands was a primary consideration. In many areas, the proposed alignment was shifted and/or a narrower roadway type was proposed to avoid or minimize wetland impacts. Additionally, where the road is adjacent to wetlands, the standard ditch will be modified. The incline to the waterline/wetland will be steeper than normal, and a guard rail will be installed at the edge of the roadway's shoulder. The resultant "Preferred Alternative" represents a practicable effort to recommend improvements that meet the future traffic capacity needs, are safe, and cause the least impacts to the social and natural environment, including wetlands.





